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FEATURE "The Mann Gulch Fire: 50th Anniversary in 1999"

Untold Story Leads From Montana

WAYNE ARNST, GREAT FALLS TRIBUNE

"Haymazing Grace" near Utica. Inset: "Ti-hay-ger Woods"

FALL 1998

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1998 Fall Events Calendar

What the Hay!

In Utica, Montana

You might call Utica Day one of Montana's great fall "block parties." Of course, the "blocks" in rural central Montana are measured in miles, not yards. Regardless of size, the "block" is still a neighborhood and the neighbors are a fun loving, creative bunch. Take the "What the Hay" Contest, a featured part of the annual Utica Day celebration. It started about ten years ago after an area rancher, just for fun, put a stuffed rodeo cowboy on a hay bale tilted like a buckin' bronc alongside the roadway. His neighbors enjoyed the hay art and decided a friendly fall competition was in order.

With creative juices flowing, area ranchers use loose hay, small bales and huge round bales to create zany images in the hayfields around Utica. Utica Day organizer Carol Campbell says most of the hay art goes up the night before to ensure the element of surprise. The next-day results have included such "pun" titled works as: Bale Clinton, Evander Haylifield (minus a piece of ear), twirling sculptures titled "Balerina" and "Taco Bale." The Unabailer and Ted Strawzinski's Cabin have been featured pieces along with the BumbleBale, Haymazing Grace and many more.

There are no yearly themes, says Campbell. Much of the inspiration for the hay art comes from the daily news. This year's Utica Day activities happen on Sunday, September 13. There is an all day arts and craft show in Utica and at the historical Woodlawn Farm Barn in nearby Philbrook. Food vendors will be on hand and the Utica Women's Club, the sponsor organization, breaks out their famous homemade pie and coffee Sunday afternoon. Campbell says everyone is welcome. Her only caution is to drive slowly on the way to Utica because you never know when a hay bale art lover is going to hit the brakes and savor the view.

Traditional Nordic and Montana Cultures Featured at Libby's Nordicfest

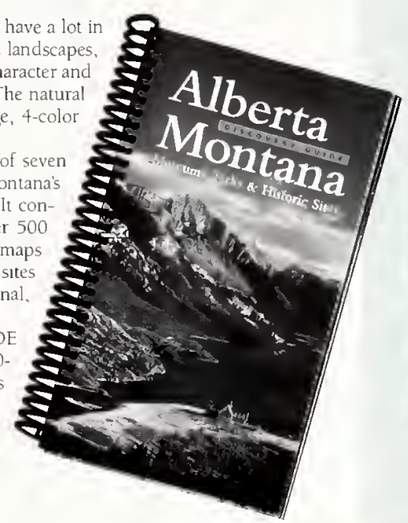
The cultural ties between the native peoples of Scandinavia and northwest Montana are one of the features of this year's Nordicfest cultural celebration in Libby, September 11-14. Members of a nomadic Scandinavian group called the Sami will be joining with the Salish and Kootenai Tribes, the original residents of northwest Montana, to set up a traditional encampment with tepees and lavoos, the Sami's traditional shelter. The encampment will be in the midst of Nordicfest's 4-day gala filled with food, dance, and community fun.

One of Nordicfest's organizers, Roger Morris, says the Scandinavian Sami have been attending the annual Libby celebration for a couple of years now. On the way out to Libby one year, Morris says they visited the Museum of the Plains Indian in Browning and were struck by the similarities "and natural ties" between the Sami culture and Montana's Indian people. The result is this year's joint encampment with the Salish-Kootenai and Blackfeet singer/songwriter Jack Gladstone performing as part of Nordicfest's entertainment.

Other Nordicfest features include the Normanden Dancers from Missoula, the International Fjord Horse Show (tawny draft horses known as the "Golden Retrievers of the Horse World"), a Brunad procession featuring local residents in traditional dress from around the world, a Nordicfest Parade, fun loving antics of the Seattle-based Poulsbo Vikings, a quilt show, great food and lots of other community activities. For more information, contact Nordicfest, 1-800-785-6541 or visit their website: www.libby.org/NordicFest/nfest.html

The Alberta-Montana Discovery Guide: Heritage Tourism In The Northern Rockies

The province of Alberta and the state of Montana have a lot in common. They share a common history, dramatic landscapes, a national boundary and their people are rich in character and love for the heritage of the land they call home. The natural bonds between the two have led to the 350 page, 4-color ALBERTA-MONTANA DISCOVERY GUIDE.



The Discovery Guide is a cooperative project of seven Alberta cultural and heritage organizations and Montana's Historical Society and Travel Montana programs. It contains descriptive information and photos on over 500 heritage sites in Montana and Alberta, along with maps directing visitors to each location. The featured sites include world-class and local museums; national, state and provincial parks; and historic sites.

The ALBERTA-MONTANA DISCOVERY GUIDE is available by calling 1-800-661-8888 or 1-800-243-9900. The price is subject to change but is currently $12.95 in both countries. For Internet information, visit the Alberta/Montana website: 2nations.state.mt.us

The Mann Gulch Fire:

50th Anniversary in 1999

US FOREST SERVICE

Mann Gulch hikers stop at one of 13 memorial markers.

August 5, 1999, marks the 50th Anniversary of one of the nation's most famous wildfires: Montana's Mann Gulch Fire. It was here north of Helena along the Missouri River's rugged, remote Gates of the Mountains' canyon that 13 firefighters lost their lives attacking what looked like a small, routine flare up. This fire's "blow up" and the crews' response have become part of the smokejumpers' training lexicon. Award-winning author Norman Maclean documented the Mann Gulch experience and controversy in his final book, "Young Men And Fire."

With the increased public interest generated by Maclean's book and the upcoming anniversary, the U.S. Forest Service has developed an informational brochure on Mann Gulch. New memorial markers have been installed and guided hikes have been offered by the Forest Service and the Gates of the Mountains Boat Tour Company.

For the 50th Anniversary observance, a 4-day event is planned, according to Amy Teegarden of the Helena National Forest. Between August 4th and 7th, smokejumpers will once again descend on Mann Gulch to lay memorial wreaths at the granite markers. A new memorial plaque will be placed at the Meriwether Picnic Area next to Mann Gulch along with temporary firefighting displays from the 1940s and 1990s. As a lead into the August 1999 observance, Teegarden says monthly guided Mann Gulch hikes are being planned beginning in May.

US FOREST SERVICE

Guided group hikes into Mann Gulch available through the Forest Service or Gates of the Mountains Boat Tours.

Helena District Forester Dave Turner has led public hikes into Mann Gulch. He says the visitor experience is quite interesting: "It is a very emotional experience for a lot of people, even people who have no personal connection with Mann Gulch prior to visiting...just about everyone feels the need to touch the memorial markers." For more information about the anniversary and public hikes, contact Turner at the Helena Ranger District, 406-449-5490.

Wibaux & Welcome: An Eastern Montana Greeting

Montana's newest visitor information center/rest area complex opened this past June in eastern Montana's gateway community of Wibaux. Just six miles west of the North Dakota border on I-94, the facility offers statewide travel information, picnic shelters, rest area facilities and an introduction to the county and town named after one of Montana's early day cattle barons.

WIBAUX MDT

Pierre Wibaux established his W-Bar Ranch in 1883. His neighbors and friends included Teddy Roosevelt and the Marquis de Mores, both ranching or meat packing operators just across the Dakota border. Undeterred by the harsh, cattle killing winter of 1886-87, Wibaux built an operation involving 25-30 cowboys and over 40,000 cows by 1889. The town of Wibaux took his name in 1895.

Today, Wibaux proudly displays Pierre's town office building and its park-like grounds as part of the Pierre Wibaux Museum Complex. Other features of the complex include a 1900s barber shop and bath house, a livery stable decorated with area cattle brands, the Montana Territorial Centennial Train Car that was displayed at the 1964 World's Fair in New York City, Old St. Peter's Catholic Church and the Pierre Wibaux Statue/burial site.

Wibaux celebrates its Polish and Scandinavian heritage every July 4th weekend with the fun-filled Eastern Montana "Ski" Festival. A number of guest ranches and cattle drive operations offer visitors western adventure opportunities. Let Wibaux welcome you

Explore lewis & Clark's Montana On The Web

When you are planning your Montana Lewis & Clark theme vacation, be sure to use Travel Montana's Lewis & Clark Montana Journey website as a research tool. The website <lewisandclark.state.mt.us> takes you along the Corps of Discovery's 2,000 mile trek across Montana. It provides information about Montana's Lewis & Clark sites, events, and a comprehensive list of "hot links" to other Lewis & Clark and Montana information websites.

The website presents information about 34 Montana Lewis & Clark sites as a series of "Discovery Points." At each "Discovery Point" there is a brief description of the site, its history, Corps of Discovery members' journal entries about the area, and current day photos of the site along with information about visitor services, activities, and directions to get there.

For example, if you wanted to follow the expedition's Montana travels in the Fall of 1805, you would access the four "Discovery Points" in western Montana's Bitterroot Valley and Lolo Pass area. You would find out that in early September at Ross' Hole the expedition met the Flathead Indians and traded for horses. Further north, they camped at Traveler's Rest near Lolo and prepared for the arduous trek over the snow-covered Bitterroot Mountains. In mid-September, they found soothing hot mineral waters at Lolo Hot Springs just days before being physically challenged by the steep terrain leading up to and beyond the Montana/Idaho border at Lolo Pass.

This information and much more is available on Travel Montana's Lewis & Clark website. Make good use of it and then come explore Montana.

Note: Montana's area code is 406.

SEPTEMBER

2–6	RAVALLI COUNTY FAIR—Hamilton 363-3411
3–6	SANDERS COUNTY FAIR AND RODEO—Plains 826-3202
3–7	MILK RIVER WAGON TRAIN—Malta 654-1795
4	BLUES & BREWS—Great Falls 454-3915
5	5TH ANNUAL SHOW AND SHINE CAR SHOW—Essex 888-5040
5	BUFFALO DAYS CELEBRATION—Gardiner 848-7971
5	CHIEF PLENTY COUPS DAY OF HONOR—Pryor 252-1289
5	MONTANA STATE CHOKECHERRY FESTIVAL—Lewistown 538-5436
5–6	LABOR DAY WAGON TRAIN—Culbertson 787-5821
5–6	SACO FUN DAYS—Saco 527-3218 or 527-3537
5–7	KNOTHEAD JAMBOREE-SQUARE DANCING—West Yellowstone 256-6387
5–7	LABOR DAY RODEO—White Sulphur Springs 547-3932
5–7	FORT UNION MUZZLE LOADERS EVENT—Fairview 747-5259
6–7	TEAM ROPING & DANCE—Custer 856-4167
7	LABOR DAY ARTS FAIR—Red Lodge 446-1370
10	TASTE OF WHITEFISH—Whitefish 862-3501
11–13	COTTONWOOD FOLK FESTIVAL—Great Falls 452-3462
11–13	FRONTIER MONTANA DAYS—Deer Lodge 846-3111
11–13	LIBBY NORDICFEST—Libby 293-4167 or 293-4124
11–13	NORTHWEST MONTANA ARMS COLLECTORS GUN SHOW—Kalispell 755-6057
12	ENNIS CHAMBER COWBOY POETRY GATHERING—Ennis 682-5488
12–13	MONTANA OLD TIME FIDDLERS' CONVENTION—Lewistown 323-1198
12–13	NORTHWEST MONTANA ANTIQUE POWER ASSOCIATION THRESHING BEE—Columbia Falls 862-7738
12–13	WHITEFISH SUMMER GAMES—Whitefish 863-2470
13	CANYON CREEK BATTLEFIELD PIPE CEREMONY—Laurel 628-8105
13	GERMANFEST—Missoula 721-9620
13	UTICA DAY FAIR—Hobson 423-5364
16–20	RIDE THE RUSSELL TRAIL—Utica 423-5454 or 888-570-0227
17–21	TESTICLE FESTIVAL—Clinton 825-4868
18–19	BELGRADE FALL FESTIVAL—Belgrade 388-1616
18–19	NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN ALLIANCE POWWOW—Butte 723-0461
18–20	RIDE '98—Columbus 373-5626
18–20	VIRGINIA CITY MOTHER LODE WRITERS WORKSHOP—Virginia City 932-4227 or 285-3119
19	COMMUNITY QUILT SHOW—Broadus 436-2416
19–20	ANTIQUE & COLLECTIBLE EXTRAVAGANZA—Billings 308-436-8355
19–20	THRESHING BEE—Choteau 466-2470
21–25	NATIVE AMERICAN AWARENESS WEEK—Pablo 675-0160 or 800-883-5344
24–27	LAUREL HERBSTFEST—Laurel 633-2300 or 628-7852
25–27	QUILT SHOW—Kalispell 257-5799
26	7TH ANNUAL OKTOBERFEST—Livingston 222-2005, Ext. 300
26–27	NORTHEAST MONTANA THRESHING BEE & ANTIQUE SHOW—Culbertson 787-5265

OCTOBER

1–31	MONTANA WATERCOLOR SOCIETY'S 16TH NATIONAL JURIED WATERMEDIA 1998 EXHIBITION—Bigfork 728-0189
2–3	NORTHEAST MONTANA FALL FESTIVAL AND TRADE SHOW—Wolf Point 653-1900
2–4	BRIDGER MOUNTAIN RAPTOR FESTIVAL—Bozeman 586-1518
3	19th ANNUAL MCINTOSH APPLE DAY—Hamilton 363-3338
3	PORT POLSON ANNUAL OKTOBERFEST—Polson 883-4345
3–4	PIONEER POWER DAY THRESHING BEE—Lewistown 538-5236
8–11	5th ANNUAL GLACIER JAZZ STAMPEDE—Kalispell 862-3814
9	WINE TASTING FESTIVAL—Hamilton 363-2400
9–11	ALTA/MONT RAILFAN WEEKEND—Essex 888-5700
10	TAMARACK TIME—Bigfork 837-4848 or 837-5888
10	FORT MISSOULA FESTIVAL—Missoula 542-2556 or 728-3662
10	FIESTA DAYS—Whitefish 862-3501
10–17	NILE STOCK SHOW AND RODEO—Billings 256-2495
11	FOREST GROVE ARTS & CRAFTS SHOW—Forest grove 538-3510
12–17	LIVINGSTON WIND FESTIVAL—Livingston 222-3793 or 222-8701
16 —18	32nd ANNUAL ST. JUDE'S CIRCLE FALL ANTIQUE SHOW & SALE—Great Falls 736-5201
17–18	GLACIER GOLDEN AUTUMN ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOW AND SALE—Essex 888-5700
23–12/4	BALD EAGLE MIGRATION—Helena 475-3128 or 475-3319
24	HILLCREST BAZAAR—Butte 494-7750
24	15th ANNUAL AUTUMN ART & CRAFT SHOW—Helena 449-4790
24	CRAFT SHOW AND SALE—Lewistown 538-3640
24	HUNTER'S STEW—Lincoln 362-4570
24–25	CHRISTMAS AT THE MANSION—Kalispell 755-2166
30	RHYTHM & BLUES AND MICRO BREWS—Billings 252-3610
30–31	HAUNTED HOUSE—Missoula 721-7275

NOVEMBER

1–30	CROSS COUNTRY FALL SKI CAMP—West Yellowstone 646-7701
6–7	6th ANNUAL HOLIDAY ART & CRAFT SHOW—Kalispell 449-4790
7	WINTER FAIR—Choteau 466-5340
7	WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL—Sidney 422-2273
7–8	HAVRE ART ASSOCIATION ANNUAL SHOW & SALE—Havre 265-2005
12–15	CHRISTMAS COLLECTION—Great Falls 727-8255 or 452-6024
13–15	HUFF'S ANTIQUE SHOW AND SALE—Billings 628-4493
14	BIG TIMBER CHRISTMAS BAZAAR AND CRAFT SHOW—Big Timber 932-4035
14	COUNTRY CHRISTMAS—Lewistown 428-2316
14	SPECIALTY FAIR—Malta 654-1436
20	DOWNTOWN HELENA FALL ART WALK—Helena 447-1535
21	BIGFORK ELVES DECORATE FOR CHRISTMAS—Bigfork 837-5888
21	CUT BANK WINTER FESTIVAL—Cut Bank 873-4041
21–22	CAN/AM SPEEDSKATING TOURNAMENT—Butte 723-5454
21–22	HOLIDAY ANTIQUE SHOW—Great Falls 727-5150
23–1/10/99	STORYLAND CHRISTMAS AT THE MOSS MANSION—Billings 256-5100
27	CHRISTMAS STROLL—Anaconda 563-2400
27	THIRD ANNUAL NORTH POLE STROLL—Ennis 682-4388
27	CHRISTMAS WALK AND PARADE OF LIGHTS—Forsyth 356-2134
27	HOLIDAY LIGHT PARADE—Glendive 365-5601
27	HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR—Helena 443-2242
27	CHRISTMAS CITY OF THE NORTH PARADE—Kalispell 758-2800
27	CHRISTMAS STROLL AND PARADE OF LIGHTS —Sidney 482-1916
27–28	HOLIDAY FESTIVAL OF ARTS AND CRAFTS—Bozeman 587-2034
27–29	RENAISSANCE FAIR—Missoula 538-2212
27–12/29	ARTISTS AND CRAFTSMAN CHRISTMAS SHOW—Kalispell 881-4288
28	HOLIDAY PARADE—Billings 259-5260
28	CHRISTMAS STROLL—Havre 265-4383
28	LIVINGSTON COUNTRY CHRISTMAS—Livingston 222-2000
29	HOLIDAY FAIR—Anaconda 563-2422
29	THE NUTCRACKER—Billings 252-3610
29	BADGER GONZO RACE SERIES—Whitefish 862-2911

FROM MONTANA

The diversity of events, places and people in Montana is almost as wide as the state itself. We hope to give you a taste of that diversity with this quarterly newsletter. In addition, my office offers these services to editors, writers and producers.

Visual Materials
Color slides, 8 x 10" B/W photos, and stock video footage are available for editorial use.

Writer/Photographer Referrals
We can put you in contact with many of Montana's most talented and experienced freelance writers and photographers.

Editorial Copy/Calendar of Events
We'll provide background information or editorial copy for many subjects. We also maintain a calendar of events for the entire state.

Individual Attention
If you need the latest vacation guide and road map of Montana, a liaison with other government agencies, or detailed information to fit a specific story angle, we're here to assist you.

Victor

Victor Bjornberg
Publicity Coordinator

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